

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the outstanding non-final Office Action mailed September 8, 2004. Upon entry of the amendments in this response, claims 1 – 4, 6, 8 – 16, 18 – 24 and 33 remain pending. In particular, Applicant has amended claims 1, 9, 17 and 33. Reconsideration and allowance of the application and presently pending claims are respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112

The Office Action indicates that claim 33 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C 112 as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

In this regard, Applicant respectfully asserts that one of ordinary skill in the art understands that an automatic carrier transfer of wafers necessarily involves selection of a series of processing that is to be performed upon the wafers. It is also well understood that the series of processing is selected prior of execution of processing. Therefore, Applicant respectfully asserts that Applicant's general description of wafer processing provides more than adequate support for the limitations of "first process operation and second process operation" and "selected for processing of the wafers prior to executing the first process operation." Since the aforementioned limitations are reasonably conveyed to one of skill in the art via Applicant's disclosure, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102

The Office Action indicates that claims 1, 4-5, 7, 9, 12-13, 15, 17, 20-21, and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C 102(b) as being anticipated by *Goerigk* (U.S. Patent No. 6,303,398).

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

With respect to *Goerigk*, Applicant notes that *Goerigk* teaches a method to recognize identification marks on wafers or cassettes, and to communicate and store the recognized identification marks to a control system (col. 4, line 4-col. 5, line 45, *Goerigk*). *Goerigk*, however, does not teach to produce a carrier transfer sub-route of the wafers dynamically by accessing first information corresponding to process operations and second information corresponding to carrier transfer operations and then correlating the first information and the second information to generate the carrier transfer sub-route. This is in direct contrast to Applicant's pending claims as is described below.

Referring now to amended claim 1, that claim recites:

1. A computer-implemented method of automatic carrier transfer, comprising using a computer to perform the steps of:
 - executing a data verification procedure after a first process operation of a plurality of wafers according to a manufacturing execution system database and obtaining a verification result, wherein the data verification procedure verifies the data between the wafers and the MES database;
dynamically producing a carrier transfer sub-route of the wafers according to the verification result by accessing first information corresponding to process operations and second information corresponding to carrier transfer operations and then correlating the first information and the second information to generate the carrier transfer sub-route;
 - executing the carrier transfer sub-route of the wafers; and
 - executing a second process operation for the wafers.

(Emphasis Added).

Applicant respectfully asserts that *Goerigk* is legally deficient for the purpose of anticipating claim 1. Specifically, Applicant respectfully asserts that *Goerigk* does not teach or otherwise disclose at least the features/limitations emphasized above in claim 1. In this regard, the Office Action indicates that *Goerigk* accesses one data set, whether that data set is stored in

one large or two smaller databases. This is in direct contrast to the limitations recited in claim 1, in which two data sets, i.e. first information and second information, are accessed and then correlated to dynamically generate the carrier transfer sub-route. Therefore, Applicant respectfully asserts that claim 1 is in condition for allowance.

Since claims 4, 5 and 7 are dependent claims that incorporate the features/limitations of claim 1 and are not otherwise rejected in the Action, Applicant respectfully asserts that these claims also are in condition for allowance.

With respect to claim 9, that claim has been amended to recite:

9. A storage medium for storing a computer program providing a method of automatic carrier transfer, comprising using a computer to perform the steps of :

executing a data verification procedure after a first process operation of a plurality of wafers according to a manufacturing execution system database and obtaining a verification result, wherein the data verification procedure verifies the data between the wafers and the MES database;

dynamically producing a carrier transfer sub-route according to the verification result by accessing first information corresponding to process operations and second information corresponding to carrier transfer operations and then correlating the first information and the second information to generate the carrier transfer sub-route;

executing the carrier transfer sub-route of the wafers; and
executing a second process operation for the wafers.

(Emphasis Added).

Applicant respectfully asserts that *Goerigk* is legally deficient for the purpose of anticipating claim 9. Specifically, Applicant respectfully asserts that *Goerigk* does not teach or otherwise disclose at least the features/limitations emphasized above in claim 9. In this regard, the Office Action indicates that *Goerigk* accesses one data set, whether that data set is stored in one large or two smaller databases. This is in direct contrast to the limitations recited in claim

9, in which two data sets, *i.e.* first information and second information, are accessed and then correlated to dynamically generate the carrier transfer sub-route. Therefore, Applicant respectfully asserts that claim 9 is in condition for allowance.

Since claims 12 and are dependent claims that incorporate the features/limitations of claim 9 and are not otherwise rejected in the Action, Applicant respectfully asserts that these claims also are in condition for allowance.

With respect to claim 17, that claim has been amended to recite:

17. A system of automatic carrier transfer, comprising :
a first execution module, executing a data verification procedure after a first process operation of a plurality of wafers according to a manufacturing execution system database and obtaining a verification result, wherein the data verification procedure verifies the data between the wafers and the MES database;
a sub-route production module, coupled to the first execution module, dynamically producing a carrier transfer sub-route according to the verification result by accessing first information corresponding to process operations and second information corresponding to carrier transfer operations and then correlating the first information and the second information to generate the carrier transfer sub-route;
a sub-route execution module, coupled to the sub-route production module, executing the carrier transfer sub-route of the wafers; and
a second execution module, coupled to the sub-route execution module, executing a second process operation for the wafers.

(Emphasis Added).

Applicant respectfully asserts that *Goerigk* is legally deficient for the purpose of anticipating claim 17. Specifically, Applicant respectfully asserts that *Goerigk* does not teach or otherwise disclose at least the features/limitations emphasized above in claim 17. In this regard, the Office Action indicates that *Goerigk* accesses one data set, whether that data set is stored in one large or two smaller databases. This is in direct contrast to the limitations recited in claim

17, in which two data sets, *i.e.* first information and second information, are accessed and then correlated to dynamically generate the carrier transfer sub-route. Therefore, Applicant respectfully asserts that claim 17 is in condition for allowance.

Since claims 20, 21 and 23 are dependent claims that incorporate the features/limitations of claim 17 and are not otherwise rejected in the Action, Applicant respectfully asserts that these claims also are in condition for allowance.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103

The Office Action indicates that claims 6, 14 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Goerigk* as applied to claims 1, 9 and 17 above, and further in view of *Babbs* (U.S. Patent No. 6,520,727), and that claims 8, 16, 24 and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Goerigk*. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections.

In this regard, Applicant respectfully asserts that the cited references, either individually or in combination, are legally deficient for the purpose of rendering obvious the features/limitations recited in dependent claims 6, 14 and 22. Specifically, Applicant respectfully asserts that *Babbs* does not teach or reasonably suggest at least the features/limitations emphasized above in independent claims 1, 9 and 17 that are lacking in *Goerigk*. Therefore, Applicant respectfully asserts that dependent claims 6, 14 and 22 are in condition for allowance.

Further, with respect to the rejection of claims 8, 16 and 24, Applicant respectfully asserts that these claims also are dependent claims that incorporate the limitations of their respective independent claims, the allowability of which is set forth above. Since the Office Action does not indicate any teaching or suggestion of the prior art for each of the limitations recited in these claims, Applicant respectfully asserts that claims 8, 16 and 24 are in condition for allowance.

With respect to claim 33, Applicant has amended this claim to recite:

33. A computer-implemented method of automatic carrier transfer, comprising using a computer to perform the steps of:
executing a data verification procedure after a first process operation of wafers according to a manufacturing execution system database to obtain a verification result, the data verification procedure verifying data between the wafers and the MES database;
dynamically selecting a carrier transfer sub-route of the wafers according to the verification result;
executing the carrier transfer sub-route of the wafers; and
executing a second process operation for the wafers;
wherein the first process operation and the second process operation are stored in a first database and are selected for processing of the wafers prior to executing the first process operation;
wherein the carrier transfer sub-route is stored in a second database; and
wherein the carrier transfer sub-route is dynamically generated by accessing first information corresponding to process operations and second information corresponding to carrier transfer operations and then correlating the first information and the second information.

(Emphasis Added).

Applicant respectfully asserts that the cited references, either individually or in combination, are legally deficient for the purpose of rendering claim 33 unpatentable. Specifically, Applicant respectfully asserts that none of the references teaches or reasonably suggests at least the features/limitation emphasized above in claim 33. In this regard, the Office Action indicates that *Goerigk* accesses one data set, whether that data set is stored in one large or two smaller databases. This is in direct contrast to the limitations recited in claim 33, in which two data sets, *i.e.* first information and second information, are accessed and then correlated to dynamically generate the carrier transfer sub-route. Therefore, Applicant respectfully asserts that claim 33 is in condition for allowance.

Cited Art Made of Record

The cited art made of record has been considered, but is not believed to affect the patentability of the presently pending claims.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing amendments and for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits that all objections and/or rejections have been traversed, rendered moot, and/or accommodated, and that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application and all pending claims are hereby courteously requested. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (770) 933-9500.

No fee is believed to be due in connection with this Amendment and Response to Restriction Requirement. If, however, any fee is believed to be due, you are hereby authorized to charge any such fee to deposit account No. 20-0778.

Respectfully submitted,

By: 
Daniel R. McClure, Reg. No., 38,962

Thomas, Kayden, Horstemeyer & Risley, LLP
100 Galleria Pkwy, NW
Suite 1750
Atlanta, GA 30339
770-933-9500